GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TRIBAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4299
ANSWERED ON:18.12.2001
HARDSHIPS FACED BY TRIBALS IN NORTH BENGAL
PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government are aware of the fact that in the under-developed districts of North Bengal, large section of Scheduled Tribes belonging to Malda, DakshinDinajpur, Uttar Dinajpur, Dajreeling, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Bihar are facing serious hardships due to malnutrition of children, poor road infrastructure of the villages, lack of fresh drinking water in summer, lack of schools and hostels and lack of opportunities for girls education in the Tea Garden areas of the Door`s in North Bengal;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether the Government are considering a comprehensive study of the non-utilisation of Plan Fund in the Eighth and Ninth Plan of this region for Tribal development and ensure appropriate provision in the tenth plan;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Union Government would consider a comprehensive model tribal PanchayatPlan for alround development of Khempur Gram Panchayat (tribal dominated) in the district of Malda of West Bengal; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM):

(a) and (b) As per report of State Government there is no information with regard to malnutrition and hardship of tribal people in North Bengal. The State Governments ha`sbeen implementing the educational, social, economic programmes, providing schools, hostels, drinking water, infrastructure for roads, bridges, culvert, minor irrigation etc. for all the tribal areas in the state including the districts of North Bengal from State Plan aswell from grants released by the Ministry under Special Central Assistance to Tribal SubPian Article 275(1) of the Constitution.

(c) and (d) Appropriate measures to ensure timely utilization and also to minimize diversion of fund have been taken by the Ministry as indicated below:

(i) Utilisation Certificates insisted upon as a prerequisite for further release of funds.

(ii) Periodic progress reports regarding the status of implementation of schemes are obtained;

(iii) Central Government offices visit the States/UTs to ascertain on the spot the progress of implementation of schemes.

(iv) Meetings/Conferences are concerned at Central level with State Secretaries of TribalWelfare to ensure timely submission of proposals for release of funds and to speed up implementation of schemes.

(v) At the State level, the agencies like Tribal Advisory Committee, Project Implementation Committees of ITDPS at Block levels and Panchayat Samities monitor timely spending of money and effective implementation of Schemes. Steps will be taken for making appropriate provisions for development of tribals of the country, including West Bengal during Tenth Plan.

(e) and (f) The Ministry provides funds under its various schemes based on the proposals received from State Governments/implementing agencies, availability of funds etc. Funds are not released in a district specific or area specific manner and it is left to the State Governments to prioritise the development requirements of districts in the State.